of the Government for export of cotton? If so, the details thereof and whether government of India has already given the permission to Gujarat for export of the cotton or would it give the same.

[English]

SHRI R.L. JALAPPA : Sir, we have already allotted 50,000 bales to the Gujarat Federation...*(Interruptions)* Please allow me to answer. We have already allotted 50,000 bales to them. On 16th we have received another letter from the Gujarat Federation. It is under our consideration.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NAIK : Mr. Speaker, Sir, minimum price fixed for cotton in 1996-97 is Rs. 1180 and 1380 and according to the monopoly cotton scheme being introduced in Maharashtra the price paid is Rs. 2100. There they get some thing. Whether the government would extend any such scheme to other parts of the country also which protects the interests of the farmers. Another thing is that every year we have to enquire from the Government whether the scheme is being extended to other parts and whether Government would start any permanant scheme which has been sanctioned?

[English]

SHRI R.L. JALAPPA : Sir, the Maharashtra Government has got this Monopoly Procurement Scheme, which has got its own liabilities also. They are spending Rs. seven to eight hundred crore every year. They are losing Rs. seven to eight hundred crore ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM NAIK : They are not losing, they are doing it in the interest of farmers...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI R.L. JALAPPA : Whatever it is, the State exchequer is losing this amount ..*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM NAIK : No ·

SHRI R.L. JALAPPA : Even now, the Government of India has given two years' extension to them in spite of knowing that the Government is losing money. We are also giving them sufficient cotton to be exported so that they can make up some losses and it is being given in the form of a better price

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NAIK : Whether the government propose to increase the minimum price?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : You cannot convert it into a debate.

SHRI S.K. KARVENDHAN : Sir, due to the heavy price of cotton, the power-loom industries are totally affected. There are 22 items allotted to hand-loom industries. The Supreme Court had allotted 11 items. There is a long pending demand from the power-loom owners to scrap these 11 items. I want to know from the Minister whether the Government is going to scrap these 11 items in favour of the power-loom industries.

SHRI R.L. JALAPPA : Sir, there were formerly 22 items. Just, recently they were reduced to 11. If they want to reduce even these 11 items also, then what about the hand-loom people? We do not have such a thinking for the present.

Export of Tea and other Plantation Items

+

*425. SHRI MAHESH KUMAR M. KANODIA :
SHRI N. DENNIS :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether export of tea and other plantation items has stagnated in the recent past;

(b) if so, the total quantity of these items exported and the foreign exchange earned therefrom during each of the last three years, country-wise;

(c) whether the Government have examined the slump prevailing in these industries;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to boost the production and export of these items?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BULLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) to (e). A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) No, Sir. Tea and Coffee exports have not stagnated in the recent past.

(b) Does not arise. However, countrywise details of export of various commodities are available in the monthly publication "Foreign Trade Statistics of India" published by the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCI&S), Calcutta, copies of which are available in the Parliament Library.

(c) and (d). Do not arise.

(e) The concerned Commodity Boards are implementing various developmental schemes to encourage activities such as replantation, extension planting and research to enhance production. Steps taken to increase exports include participation in trade fairs/exhibitions abroad, conducting publicity campaigns, market surveys, holding buyer seller meets, promoting brands etc.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to raise a procedural objection to the reply given to this question. The answer is not correct. Mr. Speaker, Sir, if you go through the reply to part (b) of the question, you will find that it is suggested - 'if you

like to have the country-wise details of export, they are available in the Parliament Library'. Then, the hon. Members will have to go to the Parliament Library. Sir, if you yourself like to have these details, you will have to go to the Library and the Library will not come to you! It should not be given in this way...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Well, the answer could have been slightly different.

Mr. Minister, instead of saying 'if you are interested', you can simply say that "the information is available in the Library". I think, you can just modify your answer in future.

[Translation]

SHRI MAHESH KUMAR M. KANODIA : Honourable Mr. Speaker, Sir, Hon'ble Minister has said in his reply to my question part (e) that various schemes are being started, to encourage the activities such as extended Plantation and Research to increase the production of tea and coffee. I would like to ask which are those schemes indicating the details thereof?

[English]

SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the Development Board, for production of tea there have been a number of nurseries, various plantation programmes and training centres for the people. They also get bank loans at soft rates. We are planning to negotiate with the World Bank to get them a loan of about Rs. 2,265 crore. The proposal is almost at the last stage of negotiation. Once such a scheme is approved, I think, we will be able to make substantial expansion in the existing areas and the productivity will increase. In the non-traditional areas like the North-Eastern States, we are planning to see how much we are able to expand the growth and development.

[Translation]

SHRI MAHESH KUMAR M. KANODIA : Honourable Mr. Speaker, I would like to know from the Minister about the production of tea and Coffee during the last three years and what was the impact of the steps taken to increase the production. I would also like to know the names of the countries where we took part in trade fairs and exhibitions and what was the outcome thereof?

[English]

SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, along with coffee we also have spices as a plantation crop. We are giving different types of training and also subsidies for various things. In case of coffee, we also have substantial amount of plantation training and nurseries. We are also doing agricultural research development. We have planned to give more additional support to coffee plantations, as I said, in the North-Eastern States along with the existing plantations in those areas.

Regarding export to various countries, we have a big list of the countries. I will prefer to lay it on the Table of the House because the number of countries is more With all details, I will send it to him.

SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR : Sir, the tea industry is the most labour industry of our country and the expansion of area has come to a stagnant stage because the land is not available. There is only one research centre in the country, that is, the Tea Research Centre in Jorhat. That Centre has given the greatet contribution. This is the only one of its kind in the world and the condition of that research centre is very deplorable. I want to know from the hon Minister of Commerce whether the Ministry of Commerce is taking any interest to develop and support that research centre so that it will continue to give the necessary advice to the industry regarding production.

Secondly, there is a great rumour in the country that the Government of India is thinking for importing tea. I very strongly object to it and tea should not be imported in the country. I want a categorical answer from the hon. Minister whether it is true or not.

MR. SPEAKER : The second part of the question is relevant, but I do not know whether the Minister has got an answer for the first part.

SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH : Regarding the second part, I would say that we are permitting the import of a small quantity of tea only for export-purposes blending. A small quantity of tea is required to be imported for the purpose of packing or blending. We have permitted the import for these purposes only and not for regular purposes, internal consumption or anything else.

MR. SPEAKER : Have you got any information about the Jorhat Centre or not?

SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH : We are going to give a lot of support to the Centre. We will see that we strengthen it hereafter.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : Sir, tea was one of the highest foreign exchange earners in the country. Now, we are facing some competition from Sri Lanka and other countries. In my recent tour to various countries, I have seen that the packing of tea by other countries is improved so much that our tea is being repacked and sold. Will the Government think of it and ask the Tea Board to look into this problem and improve the packing? Our quality is good, but how do you present the bridegroom and the bride is more important. Kindly tell us whether the Tea Board will be asked to look into this aspect so that our marketing in the international market is done in a proper manner.

SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH : Thank you very much for the valuable suggestion. In fact, this is very important item on which we are alo concentrating. Not only the Tea Board but the private sector also is encouraging these things so that we get value added prducts and

dominate the international market on these lines. I think that this is a valuable suggestion. We will take it into consideration.

SHRI A.C. JOS : Yesterday, I had given a notice for a mention in Zero Hour on the same matter.

MR. SPEAKER : This is not Zero Hour. What are you talking now?

SHRI A.C. JOS : Yesterday, I did not get time.

MR. SPEAKER : You should not misuse your right like this.

SHRI A.C. JOS : What I am saying is that...

MR. SPEAKER : We are going to the next question.

SHRI A.C. JOS : I am coming to the question.

MR. SPEAKER : Not at all. Question number 426.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Jos, this is not the way. I am allowing you to put the supplementary on Tea Board and you are talking about your chance in Zero Hour. This is not the way. I am sorry, Shri Jos.

(Interruptions)

SHRI A.C. JOS : I wanted to mention the same problem yesterday because it is a very serious thing. I mentioned it only as introduction.

MR. SPEAKER : Please put the question.

SHRI A.C. JOS : Many of the tea estates in my constituency, like Paelimedu and Munar are on the verge of closure because there are no exports. In the first part, the Minister has said that the exports are in a staggering position.

Sri Lanka is giving one year's credit for tea export. Russia had disappeared from the market and Iran-Iraq war had totally blocked such an outlet. So, we are out of the international tea market. My first question is, when tea is availale in India, why should the Government permit importing of even the smallest quantity of tea?

Secondly, can the Government not think of giving some subsidy or bank loan for the exporters to export to different places? Since Sri Lanka is backed by America, they are exporting tea by giving one year's credit. It is a very serious situation. Lakhs of people are on the verge of unemployment and many tea estates are being closed.

There are two parts. Why should the Government import and why cannot they support the exporters?

MR. SPEAKER : The first part has already been answered; you do not have to repeat it. You answer the second part of it.

SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH : Sir, on the question of tea, we are giving financial support for development and export purposes. I also agree with the hon. Member that we have lost the market in Iraq and our market has come down in Iran also. The Russian market alo is one of the markets which has affected us substantially. In spite of that, we are encouraging the development of other markets. We are able to export as per the programme and I do not think that there is any problem at all. We are able to drive into various markets. We are improving our quality and bringing in more value added products. The packaging system has also improved and we are able to do quite well.

Production and Export of Heavy Industries

*426. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether any assessment has been made of the total production in the heavy industries sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the share of heavy industries in the total exports of the country;

(d) the average number of persons employed in the said industries during the last three years alongwith the details of capital invested therein by the end of March, 1996; and

(e) the number of said industrial units functioning at present in the country?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) to (e). Industrial units are classified as SSI (Small Scale Industries) or non-SSI based on their investment in plant & machinery. The total value of output of the units with investment in plant & machinery of Rs. 50 lakhs and above in 1995-96 in terms of constant 1992-93 prices is estimated to be around Rs. 383 thousand crores. Overall capital invested in these units as on 31st March, 1996 is estimated to be around Rs. 455 thousand crores. these units currently employ around 54 lakh persons. The overall share of these units in manufacturing exports in 1995-96 was around 60%. As per Annual Survey of Industries released by Central Statistical Organisation, the total number of such units in 1992-93 were 14,101.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, as there is shortage of time, if you permit, I may ask both the supplementaries together.

MR. SPEAKER : You may do so.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : I had asked this question about heavy industries but by giving details of all industries with cost higher than Rs. 50 lakh. But the honourable Minister has defeated the very purpose of asking my question. As you know today even a small unit can not be installed with Rs. 50 lakhs what to talk